

June 26, 2008

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

California Department of Transportation
Mendocino State Route 128 Post mile 50.5/50.8 Storm Damage Repair
WDID No. 1B08005WNME

Mendocino County

On January 14, 2008 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requesting Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed Highway 128 Storm Damage Repair project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States (U.S.) associated with unnamed ephemeral drainages within the Russian River Hydrologic Unit No.114.00, Geyserville Hydrologic Sub-Area No. 114.25.

The proposed project is at two locations on Highway 128 near post mile (PM) 50.50 and PM 50.88, at the Sonoma and Mendocino County line. The purpose of the proposed project is to repair and upgrade drainage culverts and a portion of the road along the highway which have failed due to storm damage. Caltrans proposes the repair and upgrade of two culverts located at PM 0.00 (Sonoma County line) and 50.88, which are within tributaries to Edwards Creek, a tributary to the Russian River. The proposed project will include the installation of larger and more appropriately sized culverts and the use of rock slope protection (RSP) near culvert inlets and outfalls to reduce channel erosion and stabilize the embankments along Highway 128. The work at location PM 50.50 only includes roadway stabilization, without any proposed culvert work.

The proposed project will result in permanent and temporary impacts to waterways that are within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdiction. The scope of work proposed would permanently impact 414 square feet of unnamed ephemeral drainages associated with the two culvert repairs/upgrades. In addition, 210 square feet of the ephemeral drainages will be temporarily impacted for the purpose of accessing the culverts' outlets. Caltrans will utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) to provide erosion control. As an additional BMP, the proposed work will be conducted during the summer and only when the drainages are dry.

The proposed project will include the construction of a temporary detour which will entail grading of the adjacent slopes and the removal of trees and other vegetation. Caltrans proposes revegetation activities by planting trees to replace those taken during construction. Replanting will occur within the footprint of the construction area and stabilization of any disturbed area will be conducted in accordance with Caltrans BMPs. All graded areas within the project affected by the construction activities will be appropriately stabilized and/or replanted with native vegetation. In addition, construction and post construction BMPs will be implemented to ensure erosion is minimized and controlled.

The project would result in an 846 square feet increase in impervious area. Although Caltrans evaluated implementing additional treatment controls to address the increases in storm water runoff and hydro-modification within the project area; the installation and

maintenance of additional treatment controls was determined to be impractical. However, Caltrans has determined that the proposed landscape and amount of vegetation adjacent to the roadway throughout the project will provide adequate treatment for the amount of impervious surface added to the project area.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the USACE to perform the project under their Nationwide Permits No. 14 (linear transportation projects) pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. Caltrans has determined that this project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review [Class 1 Categorical Exemption (SCH No. 2007048128)]. In addition, Regional Water Board staff also determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Class 1 Categorical Exemption) and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption. The majority of proposed project activity is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2009. Construction work in all drainages will only be conducted during dry weather and when the drainages are dry. The entire project is expected to take four months to complete and is anticipated to be conducted between May 15, 2009 and October 15, 2009.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Jeremiah Puget at (707) 576-2835 or jpuget@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed road construction activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project including maps and design drawings. The related documents and comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.